



Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure

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Name of responsible (ratifying) committee	The Committee of Management : Funtington and District Village Hall Trust
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Related Procedural Documents	Complaints Policy, Volunteer Management Policy
<p>In the case of hard copies of this policy the content can only be assured to be accurate on the date of issue marked on the document.</p> <p>For assurance that the most up to date policy is being used, staff should refer to the version held on the Funtington District Community Centre website http://funtingtoncommunity.org/</p>	

1. Introduction

Funtington and District Village Hall Trust (the Trust) is an unincorporated association and is a registered charity: number 305373. It recognises that certain individuals and groups may be discriminated against on a number of grounds.

The Trust is committed to working towards eliminating all forms of discrimination both through its own work and through its employment policies and practices.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to outline the Trust's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and equal treatment for everyone who is involved with the Trust or uses its services, in terms of employment and access to services; and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice.

3. Scope

The policy applies specifically to discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Race
- d) Gender
- e) Religion or cultural beliefs
- f) Gender reassignment
- g) Marital and civil partnership
- h) Sexual orientation
- i) Pregnancy and maternity

It also encompasses those principles as set out in other relevant legislation, including the:

- a) Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- b) Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- c) Gender Reassignment Regulations 1999
- d) Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- e) Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- f) Protection from Harassment Act 1997

4. Responsibilities

The Committee of Management (the Committee) has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and will bring its existence to the attention of all volunteers, workers and users, providing training as and when necessary. The Committee is also responsible for ensuring, on a monthly basis, the receipt of details of any breaches of this policy and the actions taken.

All volunteers, workers and users have a duty as part of their involvement with the Trust to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice.

5. Process

- a) All equality concerns will be dealt with on a formal basis. To raise your concerns formally, you should do so in writing marked 'Private and Confidential' and send to the Trust Secretary (the Secretary) who will acknowledge it in writing; normally within 7 days of receipt. NB: you should keep a copy of your letter.
- b) The Secretary will give the issue a reference number and open a file, which will include all appropriate documentation

- c) The Secretary, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, will investigate the matter raised.
- d) Within a reasonable time frame - normally 21 days - the Secretary will write to you with the results of the investigation and any actions taken or to be taken to improve the quality of the services provided.
- e) If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you have the right to have your concerns heard by a panel comprising at least three members of the Committee. You will be advised of the date and time of the panel meeting and will be invited to attend, when you may speak in support of your concerns, if you wish.

If attending personally, you have the right to be accompanied by a friend or advocate to help you put your case. (The panel also has the right to have an advisor present)

- f) The panel members will listen to all the evidence presented and decide by a majority vote whether a breach of policy has occurred or provide reasons if your concerns are not upheld.
- g) The decision of the panel will be final.
- h) The Chairman of the panel will write to you with the outcome of the panel and details of any further action necessary to prevent a recurrence and, thereby, improve the quality of the services provided.
- i) All concerns raised formally and the responses to them will be recorded and filed in a secure place, along with any action taken

6. Organisational Learning

- a) At each meeting of the Committee, the Secretary will inform the Committee of the number and nature of any formal potential breaches of this policy received and the outcomes together with any action taken to prevent a recurrence.
- b) Annually, consideration will be given to the implications of concerns received. These considerations will be fed into the planning and management of future services, as part of the Trust's self-evaluation.